THE THOREAU SOCIETY BULLETIN

Number 1. October 1941

A PREFACE FOR NEWCOMERS. The Thoreau Society of America came into being last July 12, when nearly one hundred Thoreauans gathered in Concord at the call of Dr. Raymond Adams, Rev. Roland Sawyer, Walter Harding, and the Concord Thoreau group headed by Allen French. They listened to a series of informal talks on H.D.T., enjoyed dinner together at the Colonial Inn, saw the Herbert Gleason slides of the Thoreau country, toured the Concord shrines, and having found it a rewarding meeting, elected officers and a committee to set up a formal organization. Dr. Adams became the first president; Walter Harding, the secretary. (The best accounts of the meeting are in The Boston Globe for July 13; The Concord Enterprise, July 16; The Concord Herald, July 17; and the Concord Journal, July 17.)

On October 14, the committee met, again in Concord. The president and secretary had drawn up suggested by-laws, and the committee revised and improved it. We will include a copy of it in an early issue of the Bulletin. It will be brought before the society at the meeting next July 12. (Plans are already being made for the meeting in Concord then.)

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THE BOOKLETS. We have planned to issue a little series of booklets on Thoreau. Since so many members have asked for copies of the talks given at the first meeting, we will have them, in condensed form, in the first booklet. It will be printed by the offset process, since that is the least expensive kind of good printing. (The process is this: the copy is typed out as it is to appear; the pages are then photographed and reproduced in facsimile. It saves all the cost of setting up type.) We will issue the booklet in mid-winter and send it along to you as soon as we can. By the way, what would you like to see in future booklets?

FINANCES. Since there has been no regular meeting to vote on dues, we are suggesting that each of you make a contribution of one dollar to the society treasury. (That is the amount for dues suggested in the proposed by-laws.) Please send it to the secretary and along with it, your complete address and a list of your special Thoreau interests so that we can make up the permanent files. We would especially like to know which of you are collectors of Thoreauana.

A PERSONAL NOTE. I would like to see the secretary's office become a clearing-house for the convenience of all those interested in Thoreau. If you have any research problems, if you want to know the names of other members in your neighborhood so that you can form local groups (and please let us know if you do form such groups), or if you are hunting for some elusive Thoreau book to add to your collection, write in and we'll try to help you either through the information at hand or through the next issue of the bulletin. Incidently, if you see any good Thoreau "buys" in the bookstores, one's that you do not care to take advantage of yourself, send us word and we'll try to pass it along.

If my many and wandering addresses have become a problem for your memory, perhaps this note will help you. Mail send to me at 54 Prospect Street, Bridgewater, Mass. (my permanent address) will always be forwarded. For the present winter, I am living in Chapel Hill, N.C., and my address there is 11 Sutton Bldg. In closing, just a word of thanks to all those who have helped with this bulletin. There isn't room to mention you individually, but, many thanks.

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RESEARCH IN PROGRESS.

Mr. Edwin B. Hill, Ysleta, Texas, is compiling a list of all copies of the first edition of Thoreau's Week. He wants to know their present ownership, their condition, and if Thoreau wrote in the lines on Page 396.

Mr. Carl Bode, Keuka Park, N.Y., is editing a variorum edition of Thoreau's poetry. He would like to know the whereabouts of any manuscript copies of his poems, published or unpublished.

Mr. Frederick McGill, University of Newark, Newark, N.J., is working on "The Life and Works of William Ellery Channing, 2nd," Thoreau's friend and biographer. He would be glad to learn of any new information on Channing or the whereabouts of any material about him.

If you are doing some special research on Thoreau, let us know so we can list your project. If you can help any of the members above, write either them or us.

RECENT THOREAUANA. Lee, Harry. More Day to Dawn. New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1941. 167pp. $2.50. (The major Thoreau book of the year.)

There is a great deal of poetry about Henry Thoreau. Few of his biographers have caught it. But here is one who has written down the facts of Thoreau's life and made a melody of it. It is not a scholarly biography. (Although it makes fewer actual errors than most. I can find only two minor ones, neither worthy of mention.) But it is a poetic one.

Mr. Lee has written this biography of Thoreau in verse--poems tied together with brief prose passages. In some places he has taken Thoreau's own words and made a poem of them. It is hard to pick out any sections to quote for they all weave into an integrated whole. But yet the Walden section stands out somewhat above the rest. If you ever thought Thoreau a hermit at Walden, read this and you should be convinced that that experiment was not an escape but a fulfillment.

He has T's friends too--Channing, Blake ("Couldn't call him Harrison, And surely not C.O."), and Ricketson. I don't think I've seen a better piece of exposition on his reasons for his friendships than here.

Of course one cannot catch all of Thoreau in poetry. You'll find here little of the sturdy cragginess of the social critic that was Thoreau. That must wait for another biographer--and a biography that is greatly needed. But for the lyric Thoreau, this book is the answer.

Lack of room prevents giving a complete bibliography of recent Thoreauana. But in the next issue, we will give one for the whole of 1941. But here are some of the more important ones: Benson, A.B. SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCES ON THE WRITINGS OF THOREAU. Scandinavian Studies. May & August; Canby. Thoreau & Whitman on Democracy. Sat.Review of Lit. July 19; Davis, R. John Brown First Publicly Championed by Thoreau. Lowell (Mass.) Ledger. May 15.; Holway, Hope. Chapter on Thoreau in RADICALS OF YESTERDAY. Norman, Okla.: Cooperative Books, 50¢; Matthiessen, F.O. AMERICAN RENAISSANCE. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 678pp. $5.00 (Contains a great deal on Thoreau and his friends); Pierre. Lines about Thinkers. Christian Science Monitor. March 7; Straker, Robert L. Thoreau's Journey to Minnesota. New England Quarterly Sept. (New information on the Western journey from the letters of Horace Mann, Jr. who accompanied Thoreau); What Thoreau Saw at Cohasset. Scituate (Mass.) Herald. July 25. (Reprint of part of Cape Cod with notes); Warner, F.L. Spring Cleaning Time at Concord. Christian Science Monitor. May 13. (Much about the Thoreau exhibit in the Antiquarian House).

In these bibliographies, we wonder what you would like. Do you want an annual list, or a quarterly list? Do you want every item listed, or just the more important ones? (We could have a special supplement for those interested, listing everything.) Would you like a special bibliography issue listing all the items that have appeared since the Wade and White bibliographies (1937)? Let us know your ideas.

Walter Harding
Secretary

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